

Message Text

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TO USMISSION BERLIN PRIORITY

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY

USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 184131

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, GE

SUBJECT: GDR TEAM IN WASHINGTON

REFERENCE: STATE 181761

1. GDR ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM MET WITH DEPARTMENT OFFICERS
SEPTEMBER 14, AND REPORTED THEY HAD NOW SEEN MUCH OF WHAT
WASHINGTON REAL ESTATE MARKET HAD TO OFFER. OF SOME 39
BUILDINGS INSPECTED, ONLY THREE WERE STILL UNDER ACTIVE
GDR CONSIDERATION: THE TWO MENTIONED EARLIER (PARA 2
REFTEL) AND A FURTHER LARGE SITE IN NW WASHINGTON. THE
GDR TEAM REITERATED THAT THE BUILDINGS STANDING ON ALL
THREE PROPERTIES COULD BE VIEWED ONLY AS TEMPORARY OFFICES
OR RESIDENCES, AND THAT A NEW CHANCERY WOULD HAVE TO BE
BUILT IN EACH CASE ON ADJOINING GROUNDS.

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2. DEPARTMENT OFFICERS NOTED THAT ALL THREE PROPERTIES WERE ZONED FOR RESIDENTIAL USE ONLY, AND THAT EACH THEREFORE PRESENTED A POTENTIAL PROBLEM IF THE GDR SOUGHT TO CONSTRUCT CHANCERIES ON THEM. PROVISIONS OF ZONING LAW CALLING FOR PLANNED UNIT DEVELOPMENT OF TRACTS LARGER THAN THREE ACRES WERE DESCRIBED TO GDR TEAM, SINCE TWO OF THREE GDR CHOICES APPEAR TO FALL IN THIS CATEGORY. IN EACH CASE, HOWEVER, WE NOTED THAT BUILDING PLANS HAD TO BE SUBMITTED IN ADVANCE AND COULD BE CONTESTED OR DENIED, AND THAT PROCESS IN ANY EVENT WOULD BE TIME CONSUMING AND DIFFICULT.

DEPARTMENT OFFICERS SUGGESTED THEREFORE THAT GDR REPS FOCUS ON PROPERTY NOW ZONED FOR COMMERCIAL USE RATHER THAN IN EXISTING RESIDENTIAL AREAS.

3. DISCUSSION THEN TURNED TO VAN NESS CENTER, WITH PROTOCOL OFFICE PROVIDING GDR TEAM WITH FULL BRIEFING. GDR TEAM NOTED THAT WHATEVER ADVANTAGES VAN NESS CENTER LOCATION MIGHT HAVE, CONSTRUCTION OF GDR EMBASSY ON THIS SITE WOULD REQUIRE MINIMUM OF THREE YEARS. THIS LEFT UNANSWERED GDR'S NEED FOR SATISFACTORY CHANCERY FOR IMMEDIATE USE.

4. TWO GDR TEAM MEMBERS ASKED AND WERE GRANTED PERMISSION TO TRAVEL TO NEW YORK THIS WEEKEND TO REPORT TO EAST BERLIN ON RESULTS THUS FAR AND TO SEEK FURTHER INSTRUCTIONS. TEAM INQUIRED ABOUT POSSIBLE FURTHER EXTENSION OF US VISAS BEYOND SEPTEMBER 20, BUT WERE GIVEN NONCOMMITTAL REPLY.

5. AT END OF DISCUSSION, ONE MEMBER OF GDR GROUP (LINDNER DREW DEPARTMENT OFFICER ASIDE AND ASKED IF HE COULD CONVEY MESSAGE TO WINZER, WHOM HE WOULD BE SEEING IN NEW YORK, ABOUT TIMING OF SUBSTANTIVE US-GDR TALKS ON ESTABLISHMENT OF DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS. LINDNER ALSO ASKED WHETHER US HAD COME TO ANY CONCLUSION ABOUT PROPERTY ON BASIS VISIT OF US ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM TO EAST BERLIN. DEPARTMENT OFFICER SAID HE COULD PROVIDE NO REPLY TO EITHER QUESTION. US HAD NOT YET REACHED DECISION ON FIRST POINT, AND WAS STILL IN PROCESS OF STUDYING RECOMMENDATIONS OF US ADMINISTRATIVE TEAM AS TO PROPERTY QUESTIONS. CHANCERY BUILDINGS OFFERED TO US WERE BEING LOOKED AT CAREFULLY TO DETERMINE (A) THEIR SUITABILITY IN TERMS OF SIZE, (B) THE COST OF REMODELING AND RENOVATION AND (C) THE TIME REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT SUCH WORK. DEPARTMENT OFFICER SAID HE COULD NOT PREDICT RESULTS THIS STUDY, BUT EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT ABOUT CHOICES PRESENTED TO US, AND ESPECIALLY ABOUT INADEQUACY BOTH IN TERMS OF QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF

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STRATIVE TEAM AS TO PROPERTY QUESTIONS. CHANCERY BUILDINGS OFFERED TO US WERE BEING LOOKED AT CAREFULLY TO DETERMINE (A) THEIR SUITABILITY IN TERMS OF SIZE, (B) THE COST OF REMODELING AND RENOVATION AND (C) THE TIME REQUIRED TO CARRY OUT SUCH WORK. DEPARTMENT OFFICER SAID HE COULD NOT PREDICT RESULTS THIS STUDY, BUT EXPRESSED DISAPPOINTMENT ABOUT CHOICES PRESENTED TO US, AND ESPECIALLY ABOUT INADEQUACY BOTH IN TERMS OF QUANTITY AND QUALITY OF

RESIDENTIAL HOUSES SHOWN TO TEAM. DEPARTMENT OFFICER
SAID THAT WHEN US STUDY COMPLETED, WE WOULD BE IN TOUCH
DIRECTLY WITH GDR OBSERVER MISSION IN NEW YORK. LINDNER
DID NOT PRESS QUESTION FURTHER, BUT EXPRESSED VIEW THAT
EARLY US ANSWER WOULD BE HELPFUL AND WELCOME. RUSH

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